

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

For HCRS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Beach, Thomas A., House

and/or common Beach, Thomas A., House

2. Location

street & number 402 E. Hickory Street N/A not for publication

city, town Fairbury N/A vicinity of congressional district 15th

state Illinois code 012 county Livingston code 105

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b> <u>N/A</u>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. John Tollensdorf

street & number R.R.

city, town Fairbury ☒ vicinity of state Illinois 61739

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder of Deeds

street & number Livingston County Courthouse

city, town Pontiac state Illinois 61764

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Inventory of architecture before W.W. II in Livingston County  
title Interim Report has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no  
~~Illinois Historic Structures Survey~~

date October, 1973; Photographic Film Roll W-354/37, 36 federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Illinois Department of Conservation

city, town Springfield state Illinois 62706

## 7. Description

### Condition

☒ excellent  
☐ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☐ unaltered  
☒ altered

### Check one

☒ original site  
☐ moved

date N/A

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Exterior: The Thomas A. Beach house, built in 1872, is a two story, brick detached residence in Italianate style with basement and tower. All walls, interior and exterior, are brick. The shape of the roof is a combination of hip and gable. The roof contains built-in gutters. There are three porches: a classic style front porch, a latticed porch on the east side of the kitchen, and an open porch on the west side. The house has one bay window on the east and 36 regular windows of which four are basement windows and four are tower windows. The remaining windows are generally grouped in twos in the downstairs and front upstairs, and are single elsewhere. The double-leaved front door, containing a push bell, is original. The east and west side doors have been replaced with metal doors grained to resemble wood. There are two chimneys. The west chimney has four flues and the east one has two. The foundation is a combination of cut Joliet stone, field stone, and brick. A garage was added to the back of the house about 1951. None of the original outbuildings remain. A rock garden was built about 1910. The 1½ acre lot is part of the original grounds.

Decorative Elements: The front porch has four sets of triple pillars, a curved porch railing, mosaic tile floor with distinctive designs, and three hand blown globes for ceiling light fixtures. The pediment over the porch steps has floral reliefs. A series of small blocks runs below the overhang of the porch roof. Most of the windows are capped with a rounded brick hood and a Masonic keystone. Distinctive, carved double brackets support the gutter overhang. Small oval reliefs are found between the brackets in each set and larger reliefs separate the pairs of brackets. A pair of fire-clay lions rests in the front yard and a wrought iron fence and gate are found at the front of the lot. The lions, fence, and gate are all original.

Interior: The house contains an open front stair with carved walnut balusters and cypress trim which contains original relief carvings and woodgraining. A closed back stair was provided for the servants quarters. Interior trim is of cypress as is the exterior trim. All the trim is original. All doorknobs and hinges are original; many of them are etched brass or bronze downstairs while plainer fittings and porcelain knobs were used upstairs. Keyhole covers are found throughout the house. Original window locks remain. Ceiling light fixtures in the front hall, dining room, library, and several bedrooms date from the installation of electricity. The original interior wooden shutters are found in the library which also contains distinctive plaster moldings around the ceiling. Rounded corners are found in the hall downstairs and several bedrooms upstairs. All bedrooms contain built-in closets built at the same time as the house.

Alterations: The physical features of the house are essentially the same as the original house. The original owner added the back half of the house about 1886 and the present front porch near the turn of the century to replace the original front porch. These additions constitute part of the historic house. A garage was added to the back about 1951. In 1981-82 the house was restored with new carpeting and wallpaper, repainting and graining of interior woodwork (except front stairway), complete modernization of kitchen and bathrooms (except downstairs tub), the addition of storm windows in a style keeping with the original character of the house, the addition of a new spiral staircase to the tower, putting new asphalt on the roof, repainting exterior trim in Williamsburg historic colors, constructing new sidewalk in Victorian style, and resetting of front porch on its foundation.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
	1872-Front half of house			
<b>Specific dates</b>	1886-Back half of house	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	Thomas A. Beach/T.D. George, Mason	
	C.1900-Front porch			

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Thomas A. Beach House is a fine example of 19th century Italianate architecture with its long slender windows, central tower, large overhang at the gutter line, and double brackets at the eaves. The house is physically the same as originally built and added to by its first owner (except for a garage added to the back in 1951). Comparison with early photographs shows how well it has kept its original character. It shows some of the features of the Morse-Libby House in Portland, Maine and is similar to the Fugate house in Fairbury, built by the same mason who built the Beach house. The Beach house displays a number of significant construction techniques. The exterior brick walls are triple brick with airspaces between them to provide insulation. In the basement, air grates connect to the air space between the brick walls and run all the way to the round louvered exhausts in the attic. The interior doors to the hallway all have transoms to assist in ventilation. The house is itself a history of heating. It was originally heated by fireplaces which were removed when central heating was installed. In the early 1900's this house and three others were heated by steam from a large greenhouse then located to the north of the house. Since then it has had hot water heat and now has hot air heat. Built-in gutters in the roof, still in use, are of various sizes depending on the amount of water they can expect to collect from the different areas of the room. The eaves containing these gutters are not an extension of the roof but are separate structures attached to the main building. This technique helped to prevent water damage to the main house if water should back up in the gutters. When the foundation of the front porch was reset in 1981-82, it was discovered that the original builder had had the foundation stones numbered. This system was followed to replace the stones after foundation repairs. The house had its own methane producing equipment when gas lighting was used. This equipment is still buried in the yard and some of the original gas pipes and outlets can still be seen in the basement. The house was built in 1872 by Thomas A. Beach who resided there until his death in 1911. It remained in his family until 1981. The Beach family has made important contributions to Fairbury's social, economic, and political life and consequently the house has acquired much local significance. Thomas A. Beach, the original owner, was a leading farmer and businessman in early Fairbury. He was one of the founders of a firm which was a predecessor of the present National Bank of Fairbury, and he was also active in the municipal and school government and in the Fairbury Fair, still in existence today. The house was later the residence of his granddaughter, Alma Lewis James, local author and historian and genealogist of the Beach and Lewis families in America. She wrote numerous genealogical works and two editions of Stuffed Clubs and Antimaccassars, a history of Fairbury from its beginning to 1900, which time covered the period of construction of the Beach house.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

The Victorian Era in Fairbury and America, Robert Ficklin, pp. 11-15, 1974.  
Unpublished college term paper, copies available from Mrs. Mary Orth, Fairbury, Illinois and Mr. Robert Ficklin, Fairbury, Illinois.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1½ acres

Quadrangle name PONTIAC, IL

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UMT References NOT AVAILABLE W 88°30' N 40°45'

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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E 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

East Half of Lot 4 and all of Lot 3 in Block 39 in North Addition to Fairbury, Livingston County, Illinois.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state NA code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul G. Mason

organization Attorney for Owners

date April 14, 1983

street & number 113 W. Walnut

telephone (815) 692-4336

city or town Fairbury

state Illinois 61739

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

     national      state   X   local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title District

date 6/22/83

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



IN REPLY REFER TO:

## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

AUG 1 1983

The Director of the National Park Service is pleased to inform you that the following properties have been entered in the National Register of Historic Places during the week beginning July 24, 1983 and ending July 30, 1983. For further information call (202) 343-9552.

STATE, County, Vicinity, Property, Address, (Date Listed)

CALIFORNIA, Butte County, Oroville, Oroville Commercial District (Old), Montgomery, Myers and Huntoon Sts. and Miners Alley (07/28/83)

CALIFORNIA, Orange County, Santa Ana, Southern Counties Gas Co., 207 W. 2nd St. (07/28/83)

CONNECTICUT, Hartford County, New Britain, Burritt Hotel, 67 W. Main St. (07/28/83)

CONNECTICUT, Litchfield County, Roxbury, Roxbury Center, CT 67, Weller's Bridge Rd., South and Church Sts. (07/28/83)

CONNECTICUT, New Haven County, New Haven, Plymouth Congregational Church, 1469 Chapel St. (07/28/83)

CONNECTICUT, New Haven County, Unionville, Tunxis Hose Firehouse, Lovely St. and Farmington Ave. (07/28/83)

CONNECTICUT, New Haven County, Waterbury, Bank Street Historic District, 207-231 Bank St. (07/28/83)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, Meridian Mansions, 2400 16th St. NW (07/28/83)

ILLINOIS, Adams County, Camp Point, Thomas, F.D., House, 321 N. Ohio St. (07/28/83)

ILLINOIS, Brown County, Dewitt, Benjamin, House, (07/28/83)

ILLINOIS, Cook County, Kenilworth, Hiram, Baldwin, House, 205 Essex Rd. (07/28/83)

ILLINOIS, Kane County, Batavia, United Methodist Church of Batavia, 8 N. Batavia Ave. (07/28/83)

ILLINOIS, Livingston County, Dwight, Pioneer Gothic Church, 201 N. Franklin St. (07/28/83)

ILLINOIS, Livingston County, Fairbury, Beach, Thomas A., House, 402 E. Hickory St. (07/28/83)

ILLINOIS, Madison County, Troy, Carney, John, House, 306 E. Market St. (07/28/83)

KENTUCKY, Cumberland County, Marrowbone, Marrowbone Historic District, KY 90 (07/28/83)

LOUISIANA, Iberia Parish, New Iberia, East Main Street Historic District, East Main, Lee, Ann and Phillip Sts. (07/28/83)

MARYLAND, Baltimore (Independent City), Perkins Square Gazebo, George St. and Myrtle Ave. (07/28/83)

MARYLAND, Baltimore (Independent City), St. Leo's Church, 221 S. Exeter St. (07/28/83)

MARYLAND, Baltimore (Independent City), Taylor's Chapel, 6001 Hillen Rd., Mount Pleasant Park (07/28/83)

MICHIGAN, Genesee County, Flint, Industrial Mutual Association Auditorium, 815 E. 2nd Ave. (07/28/83)

MICHIGAN, Kent County, East Grand Rapids, Blodgett, John W., Estate (Brookby), 250 Plymouth Rd. SE (07/28/83)

MISSISSIPPI, Warren County, Vicksburg, Luckett Compound, 1116-1122 Crawford St. (07/28/83)